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Letter dated 27 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 27 February 1998, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 27 February 1998 from Mr. Aytuğ Plumer addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letters dated 10 and 23 February 1998 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations which contain allegations regarding "violations of the airspace of the Republic" (A/52/793-S/1998/120 and A/52/800-S/1998/149).

I would like to recall that similar charges on so-called "airspace violations" were rejected in toto in our successive communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 19 January 1998 (A/52/773-S/1998/57, annex). I wish to reiterate briefly that flights within the sovereign airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State, over which the usurper Greek Cypriot regime in the South has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever.

The barrage of allegations made by the Greek Cypriot administration on so-called "airspace violations" emanate from its untenable claims to sovereignty and jurisdiction over the whole of the island. These allegations are aimed at providing a smokescreen for the policy of escalation and tension which the Greek Cypriot side has been pursuing intensively with the support of Greece. The Greek Cypriot side has been building up its arms and armed forces through a militarization programme involving excessive spending. With the construction of the "Andreas Papandreou" military airbase in Paphos and the decision to deploy sophisticated weapons, such as the S-300 missile system, in line with the "joint defence doctrine" between the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece, the military build-up in the South has taken a dangerous and reckless turn. These are disturbing developments which constitute an effort to alter the military balance in favour of Greece, thereby creating instability in the region.

All parties interested in the peaceful settlement of the Cyprus dispute should draw the attention of the Greek Cypriot side to the dangers inherent in the policy of escalation and tension it is pursuing on the island. Greek Cypriots must come to realize that militarization and the continued denial of the Turkish Cypriot people's vested right of sovereign equality are the principal factors inhibiting progress towards a peaceful settlement in Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLUMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus